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05/28/2008

Earliest known portrait of island born Acadian coming home to PEI

Charlottetown – Acknowledging the 250th anniversary of the expulsion of Acadians from Prince Edward Island, the Confederation Centre Art Gallery has brought back to the Island the earliest known portrait of an Acadian who was born here, Pierre Douville (1745–1795). The portrait will hang in the Confederation Centre's Concourse from June 2 until August 31.

Pierre Douville was born in 1745 in PEI, which was then called Ile St. Jean. His father, Francois Jean Douville, was shipwrecked on the island and is considered to be one of the first colonial inhabitants. Pierre Douville became a seaman sailing ships from Canada to New England. As Acadians the Douville family was part of the Great Expulsion (le Grand Dérangement), the forced deportation of the Acadians living on Ile St. Jean after the British captured the island in 1758.

The family was deported to France in 1758. Pierre Douville subsequently emigrated to New England where he offered his services as a skilled seaman to the American forces during the Revolutionary War. He became a lieutenant in the American navy and was decorated for his service. After the war Douville settled in Providence, Rhode Island with his wife Cynthia Aborn and from all accounts lived quietly as a merchant. He was, however, still a French subject and felt an obligation to respond to the call of his country as it suffered during its own revolution. In 1794 Douville was wounded in a major sea battle between the English and the French and died from his injuries.

This painting is part of the collection of Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. It was given to Brown in 1887 by Douville's granddaughters, Miss Cynthia Douville and Mrs. Sarah A.

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Arnaud Maggs, *Self-portrait with Deborah, Oued Laou*, 1969, gelatin silver print.
From the exhibition *Photography 101: push the button*. Until

2008-04623/

September 28

Anne of Green Gables - The Musical™: June 12 - September 27 (select dates)

The Ballad of Stompin Tom: July 3 - September 20 (Mon - Sat)

Feist: November 10

Tinkham. Its painter is unidentified, but it is said to have been executed in France in 1794, shortly before Douville's death.

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